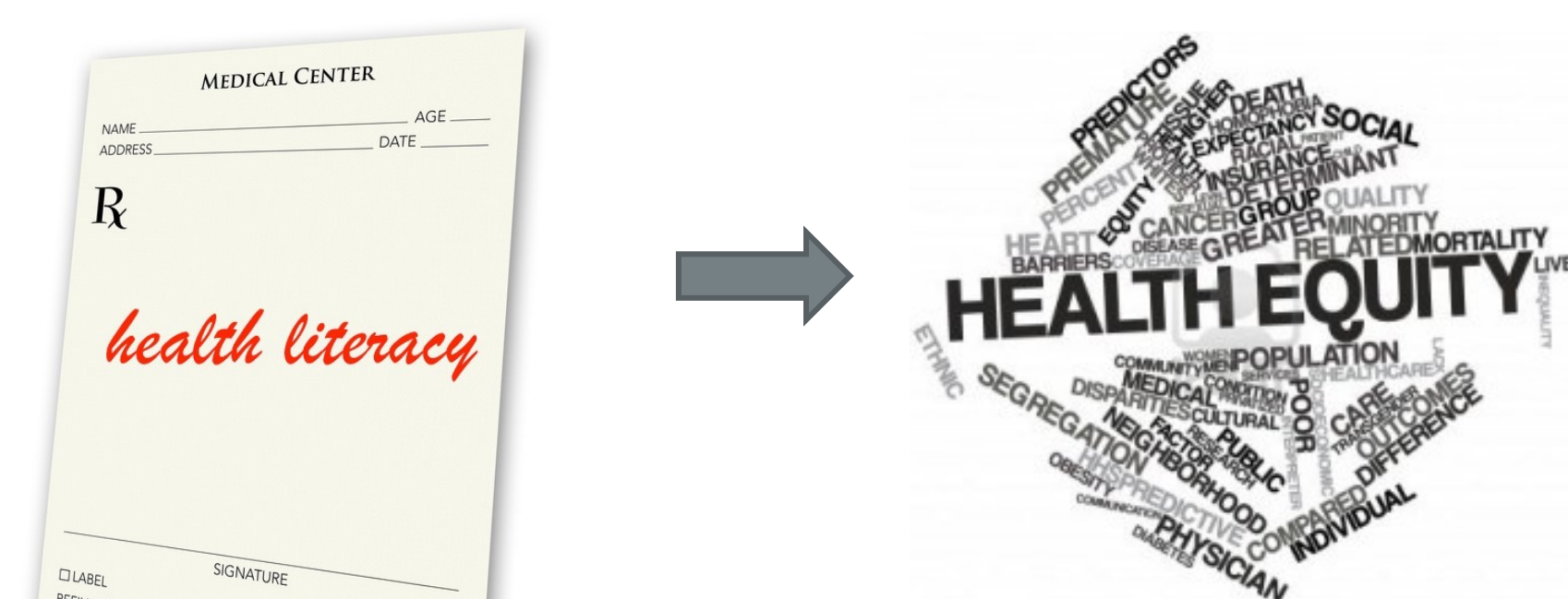


INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Health Literacy and Equity

- Good writing and communication overall can enhance and improve health care equity.
- Health literacy is a foundational principle for achieving health and well-being ([HealthyPeople 2030](#)).
- Multiple studies have shown that poor communications promote inequities in health care.



Considering the Impact of Low Health Literacy

Almost **90 million** American adults have difficulty understanding and using health information ([Center for Health Care Strategies, Inc.](#))
Mostly affected - Lower socioeconomic status, Publicly financed health coverage, Elderly 65+ (59% prevalence), Black (58% prevalence) and Hispanic (66% prevalence) Populations ([National Assessment of Adult Literacy](#))



- Medication errors
- High rates of non-compliance with medical instructions
- Reduction in use of preventative services
- Overutilization and unnecessary services
- Inadequate self care
- Longer hospital stays
- Higher mortality



Interdisciplinary/Interprofessional Collaboration

- Professionals with a vested interest in the health and well-being of patients:
 - All are vital for forging health care equity through health literacy.
 - All have a role or can have an impact on the the efficient and effective dissemination of health information and for delivering quality health care.
 - All need to know the appropriate levels of communication that can ensure health equity and have skill and proficiency in clear oral and written communications.
 - Collaboration is essential among health care providers, lawyers, public health and social services professionals, as well as other professionals.

LAW 128: INTERPROFESSIONAL WRITING AND COMMUNICATIONS FOR HEALTH LITERACY AND HEALTH EQUITY

Course Description and Objectives

This course is open to students from various disciplines including communications, law, medicine, nursing, public health, and social work. Students learn the fundamental components for good writing and communication with patients. With a focus on low health literacy populations, students review various documents that patients need to understand for making decisions about their health and wellness, for realizing their health care rights, as well as for ensuring their safety while using health care products. Students have an opportunity to identify poor communications illustrated within medical appointment and medication instructions, informed consent documents, durable power of attorney forms, arbitration agreements, and healthcare marketing material. A core objective in this course is to bridge professional gaps in awareness on how insufficient health communications impacts the information that is given to patients. Students write collaboratively and problem solve through simulated exercises and hypotheticals to determine how their respective professions can work together to address issues of low health literacy and in doing so enhance health equity.

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Define health literacy and its connection to health equity.
- Describe situations where a patient exhibits low health literacy.
- Explain and use basic health literacy methods such as “teach-back” to enhance patient understanding.
- Analyze hypotheticals regarding issues of health equity.
- Apply principles of health literacy for clear oral and written communications.
- Identify the benefits of interprofessional collaborations for improving patient health literacy.
- Reimagine and evaluate the role that their respective professions have in enhancing health literacy for patients.
- Illustrate ways for bridging gaps in communications for patients with low health literacy.

Sample Profile of Students: Disciplines and Degrees

LAW	MEDICINE	PUBLIC HEALTH	SOCIAL WORK
JD LLM MJ	MD MD/MPH	MPH	MSW

REFLECTIONS AND A TEACHING/TRAINING CALL TO ACTION

Reflections

- Interdisciplinary/Interprofessional collaborative learning enriches a health curriculum.
- Courses regarding health literacy can be a foundation for bringing together students from various disciplines to problem solve practical concerns within health literacy.
- Teaching/Training is enhanced through observing interdisciplinary student engagement and collaboration.



Teaching/Training Call to Action

- Consider ways in which interdisciplinary/interprofessional collaborative learning can be incorporated into your health literacy curriculum.
- Craft exercises or projects that would allow students from various disciplines to contribute their professional perspectives within your health literacy courses or training.
- Reflect upon your own teaching/training methods and consider the pedagogical benefits of adding interdisciplinary/interprofessional courses or activities to your teaching experience.



TEACHING APPROACH AND COLLABORATIVE LEARNING

Collaborative Learning through Hypotheticals and Simulation Exercises



Health Literacy Issues

- Informed Consent
- Medical Appointment Instructions
- Arbitration Agreements
- Durable Power of Attorney for Health Care
- Prescription/Medication Instructions
- Marketing Material

Health Literacy Tools and the Teach-Back Method



Teamwork/Group Presentation and Simulation Project

